REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action mailed April 20, 2006 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claims 1-13 are pending in this application, with claims 1 and 11 being the only independent claims. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as herein amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claim Amendments

Claims 3 and 4 are amended to correct grammatical errors. Claim 13 is added to recite "a plurality of conductor tracks disposed on said printed circuit board configured to provide an electrical drive for each of said first and second instrument mechanisms". Support for this limitation is found at paragraph 0014 on page 10 of the original specification.

Claim Objections

In the Office Action mailed April 20 2006, claims 3-4 stand objected to for various informalities. More specifically, the Office Action states that the word "mechanisms" should be --mechanism-- in each of claims 3 and 4. Claims 3 and 4 have been amended to replace the two instances of the word "mechanisms" with the word --mechanism-- as suggested by the Examiner. In view of the amendments, the objections to the claims should now be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 11, 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,324,197 (Parfitt) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,178,917 (Jansa).

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Parfitt and Jansa in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,557,485 (Sauter).

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Parfitt, Jansa, and Sauter in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,529,014 (Ohta).

Claims 4-10 were found to contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. While the finding of allowable subject matter is appreciated, the rejections of the claims 1-3, 11, and 12 are traversed in view of the following remarks.

Independent claim 1 is drawn to a pointer instrument and recites "a printed circuit board having an upper side and a lower side", "first and second instrument mechanisms independently arranged on said printed circuit board such that the printed circuit board is between the first and second instrument mechanisms", and "first and second pointers having concentric pivoting axes, each of said first and second pointers comprising a radially extending element arranged above said upper side of said circuit board, wherein said first instrument mechanism acts on said first pointer and said second instrument mechanism acts on said second pointer, said first and second instrument mechanisms having essentially concentric rotational axes".

The Examiner alleges that the galvanometer 4 and potentiometer 7 of Parfitt are the recited first and second mechanisms of claim 1. However, the potentiometer 7 of Parfitt does not act on the second pointer and thus can not be considered the second instrument mechanism.

Parfitt teaches an instrument assembly (1) that includes a current value indicator element (6) that is rotatably mounted on a shaft (5) and a set value indicator element (12) that is controlled by a knob (14) and is mounted in the glass face (10) of the instrument for rotation about the axis of the shaft (5). Spur gears (9, 13) connect the set value indicator element (12) to a shaft (8) serving as input to a signal outputting means (7).

Parfitt discloses that a galvanometer 4 drives, or acts on, a current value indicator needle 6 (see col. 2, lines 48-62 of Parfitt). Parfitt further discloses a potentiometer 7 is also mounted within the housing 2 but is arranged to lie spaced from the axis of the output shaft 5 of

the galvanometer and with its input shaft 8 parallel to the shaft 5. The free end of the input shaft of the potentiometer 7 also extends through the scale plate 3 and has a spur gear 9 secured to that free end (col. 2, line 62 to col. 3 line 16).

A stepped boss 11 is mounted centrally of the window plate 10 and is journalled therein for rotation about the axis of the shaft 5 of the galvanometer 4 and a set value indicator needle 12 is formed integrally with the boss 11 and has a length substantially equal to that of the needle 6 so that it is also rotatable about the axis of the shaft 5 over the graduated scale on the scale plate 3 (col. 3, lines 4-11). A spur gear 13 is also secured to the boss 11 axially inwardly of the set value indicator 12 and is in engagement with the spur gear 9 on the input shaft 8 of the potentiometer 7 (col. 3, lines 11-14). A control knob 14 is fixed on a portion of the boss 11 which protrudes through to the outside with respect to the window plate 10 such that Parfitt discloses that the potentiometer is connected to a needle 12 via shaft 5, which is also coupled to a knob 14 (col. 3, lines 14-16).

Parfitt further discloses that rotation of the knob 14 and the boss 11 causes rotation of the spur gear 13 attached thereto and corresponding rotation of the spur gear 9 and the input shaft 8 to the potentiometer 7 so as to establish a signal output from the potentiometer 7 corresponding to the position of the set value indicator 12 over the scale plate 3 (col. 3, lines 24-33). Clearly, Parfitt teaches that the knob 14 controls the potentiometer 7. The needle 12 indicates to what value the potentiometer 7 is set. There is absolute no teaching or suggestion that the potentiometer 7 acts on the needle 12.

Since Parfitt discloses that both the needle 12 and potentiometer 7 are elements which are acted on by the control knob 14, the potentiometer 7 can not be considered to be the

claimed second instrument mechanism which "acts on the second pointer", as expressly recited in independent claim 1.

Jansa fails to teach what Parfitt lacks. Jansa only teaches a pointer instrument that has two pointer flags, which can pivot in a common plane about a common axis. The pointer flags can each be deflected independently of each other in the region of a separate sector of a circle by a pointer drive.

In contrast to Applicants' recited invention, Jansa does not teach or suggest first and second instrument mechanisms independently arranged on the printed circuit board such that the printed circuit board is between the first and second instrument mechanisms.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is allowable over the combined teachings of Parfitt and Jansa.

Independent claim 11 recites limitations similar to independent claim 1 and is therefore patentable over Parfitt and Jansa for at least those reasons discussed in connection with independent claim 1.

Claim 12, which depends directly from the independent claim 11, incorporates all of the limitations of amended independent claim 11 and is therefore patentably distinct over Parfitt and Jansa for at least those reasons provided for amended independent claim 11.

Rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action states that the combination of Parfitt, Jansa, and Sauter teaches the subject matter recited in Applicants' claim 2.

Parfitt and Jansa have been previously discussed and do not teach or suggest the subject matter of Applicants' independent claim 1. Further, because Parfitt and Jansa do not

teach or suggest the subject matter recited in independent claim 1, and because Sauter does not teach or suggest the elements of claim 1 that Parfitt and Jansa are missing, Sauter is irrelevant.

Claim 2, which depends directly from the independent claim 1, incorporates all of the limitations of independent claim 1 and is therefore patentably distinct over Parfitt, Jansa, and Sauter for at least those reasons provided for claim 1.

Rejection of claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action states that the combination of Parfitt, Jansa, Sauter, and Ohta teaches the subject matter recited in Applicants' claim 3.

Parfitt, Jansa, and Sauter have been previously discussed and do not teach or suggest the subject matter of Applicants' independent claim 1. Further, because Parfitt, Jansa, and Sauter do not teach or suggest the subject matter recited in independent claim 1, and because Ohta does not teach or suggest the elements of claim 1 that Parfitt, Jansa, and Sauter are missing, Ohta is irrelevant.

Claim 3, which depends indirectly from the independent claim 1, incorporates all of the limitations of independent claim 1 and is therefore patentably distinct over Parfitt, Jansa, Sauter, and Ohta for at least those reasons provided for claim 1.

Newly added claim 13

Dependent claim 13 has been added to recite "a plurality of conductor tracks disposed on said printed circuit board configured to provide an electrical drive for each of said first and second instrument mechanisms". This limitation is not disclosed by the prior art of record.

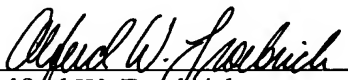
Conclusion

The application is now deemed to be in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is solicited.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,

COHEN, PONTANI, LIEBERMAN & PAVANE

By 

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